



Rounding up for our communities

***Burke-Divide Electric launches
community donation program.***

Learn more inside.

JANUARY 2010

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Burke-Divide Electric launches Operation Round Up



Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative has begun a charitable giving program called Operation Round Up which will benefit organizations and communities across the cooperative's service territory.

The idea for Operation Round Up was originally developed at a South Carolina electric cooperative, Palmetto Electric Cooperative, in 1989. The program's success prompted other cooperatives across the country to adopt the same program.

Now, Burke-Divide Electric has joined the program.

When Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative members pay their electric bill each month, beginning with the February billing, they will be doing more than just buying electricity. They will also be giving back to their community.

Through Operation Round Up, cooperative members "round up" their electric bills to the next whole dollar each month. A participant in Operation Round Up with an electric bill of \$38.63 would actually pay \$39 and the extra 37 cents is placed into the Operation Round Up fund.

The average member donates 50 cents a month, or \$6 a year. The most any member would donate is 99 cents a month, or less than \$12 a year. But with thousands of electric cooperative members participating, the pennies quickly become serious money and will be used to benefit organizations and individuals across Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative's service territory.

A board of three trustees, one from each district, representing the members will review Operation Round Up applications during the year and determine where the funds will be donated. The board, which will be selected by the directors, plans to meet quarterly.

"All accounts will automatically be enrolled," explains Heidi Robbins, Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative's member ser-

vices coordinator. Members can opt out of the program if they wish.

"We wanted to have a good pool of money to help out with community activities and organizations," she says. "Funds will go toward nonprofit organizations that are not funded or underfunded. The money will all stay locally in our service area."

Members who wish to donate more may include that additional amount when they pay their electric bill. Employees of Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative will also have the option to "round down" their paychecks, with those funds also donated to Operation Round Up.

Organizations interested in applying for Operation Round Up funds may request an application from the cooperative.

GUIDELINES FOR FUNDING

Funds will be disbursed in the general service area of Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative solely for charitable, educational, scientific, health or safety purposes. Organizations must be exempt from federal income tax under s501 (a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. Funds cannot be used for political purposes.

Fund established for co-op employee

Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative's dispatcher/plant accountant, Roxi Iverson and her family lost their home to a tragic fire in December. To assist the family, a fund has been established at Dacotah Bank in Bowbells. Those wishing to donate may send money to the bank at: 15 Main St. S.E., Bowbells 58721. Donations may also be mailed to Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative at, P.O. Box 6, Columbus, ND 58727.

The family is currently living with Roxi's family in Crosby. She is a 26-year employee of the cooperative.

Take the **BRRRRR** out of WINTER

With **ELECTRIC HEAT** from
BURKE-DIVIDE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE



In North Dakota, we never know what winter will bring!

Heating your home or business with electricity is easy! There are many options that make electric heat sensible, efficient and cost-effective.

CONSIDER:

- **Zoned electric heat:** By using separate baseboard heaters and thermostats in individual rooms, zoned electric systems allow you to control the comfort level of the room you're using without turning up the heat in the whole house.
- **Heat pumps:** Heat pumps are the most efficient form of electric heating, providing three times more heating than the equivalent amount of energy they consume in electricity. A heat pump can trim the amount of electricity you use for heating as much as 30 to 40 percent.
- **Plenum heat:** Electric plenum heaters are designed to convert your furnace to a dual-heating system. The electric plenum heater provides primary heat to your home or business. It uses your existing furnace fan to move the heat throughout your home.

ELECTRIC HEAT IS:

- Efficient
- Cost-effective
- Sensible



Call Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative for more information about clean, safe electric heat. And be sure to ask about our programs designed to help you take advantage of electric heat!

Call (701) 939-6671 or (800) 472-2983.

Low-interest loans available!

Do you want to make some improvements to your home or business but your dollar is stretched thin? If so, let Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative assist you by providing loans for installation of energy conservation measures, electric heating, dual-heating equipment, air conditioning, heat pumps, ground-source heat pumps, electric crop drying, major appliances and other equipment.

For years, Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative has offered the loan program to qualified members to assist them in upgrades to their home or business.

These loans are made in accordance with procedures and guidelines established by the board of directors.

Your loan payment can be automatically deducted from your checking account, along with your electric bill. It's that easy. Contact Burke-Divide Electric today to find out if you qualify.

BEFORE. AFTER.

BURKE-DIVIDE ELECTRIC'S PAYMENT OPTIONS



- STEP 1:** Find a pen. No, that one doesn't work. And a crayon won't do. Keep digging, there's one in that drawer somewhere.
- STEP 2:** Find your checkbook. Wasn't it on the desk the last time you looked?
- STEP 3:** Dig the bill out of the pile.
- STEP 4:** OK, now write out the check. Oh, oh. It's your last check. Better remember to reorder.
- STEP 5:** Now put everything in the envelope. Seal it shut. Ouch! Paper cuts on the tongue are the worst.
- STEP 6:** Find a stamp. Never mind that they now cost 42 cents.
- STEP 7:** Get dressed. Drive to the post office to mail your bill. It's gotta be in the mail today or it's gonna be late.
- STEP 8:** Drive home. Whew, got it paid for another month.

Don't worry. It's taken care of.

PAYMENT OPTIONS WILL SAVE YOU TIME, MONEY

Are you tired of the hassle of paying your bill by check every month? You have options! Through Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative's pay-by-bank option, you can have your payment automatically deducted from your checking or savings account. You will receive your electric bill as usual. Then, Burke-Divide Electric will automatically deduct payment from your account.

BURKE-DIVIDE ELECTRIC OFFERS OTHER EASY PAYMENT OPTIONS:

- Use the automatic credit card payment option. This feature works just like the pay-by-bank option, only it's your credit card information that is stored in your account.
- Or use e-check, which uses an electronic check to deduct payment from your account.

Take the hassle out of paying your bills today! For more information or to enroll, call Burke-Divide Electric at (701) 939-6671 or (800) 472-2983 or visit www.bdec.coop and click on "Customer Service."

Scholarships available to local students!



You could win a \$1,000 scholarship!

Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative strongly believes in the future of area students. To help students prepare for their future journey, Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative is offering a \$1,000 scholarship to a qualifying dependent of a Burke-Divide Electric member through a program sponsored by Basin Electric Power Cooperative.

WHAT IS IT?

The scholarship program, designed to encourage and recognize the achievements of children of cooperative members, is administered through your local cooperative. To qualify, students must be enrolled or planning to enroll in a full-time undergraduate or graduate course of study at an accredited two-year or four-year college, university or vocational/technical school. They must be U.S. citizens and be dependents of cooperative members.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Recipients will be chosen on a combination of SAT/ACT scores and overall grade point average; activities, achievements and honors; work experience; a personal statement of career goals; and an appraisal from a high school or college counselor or advisor, instructor or a work supervisor who knows the student well.

Applications for the scholarship, to be awarded during the 2009-2010 school year, will be accepted at Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative headquarters in Columbus. The deadline for applications is Feb. 3, 2010.

For more information, call (800) 472-2983 or (701) 939-6671. An informational brochure and scholarship application are also available on Burke-Divide Electric's Web site at www.bdec.coop. Click on "Your Community," then "Education."

The deadline to apply for the Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative \$1,000 scholarship is Feb. 3, 2010.

Apply for \$500 scholarship!

The Burke-Divide Memorial Foundation is again offering the Burke-Divide Memorial Scholarship for area students in the amount of \$500.

This is a memorial program in which anyone may participate. Founded in 1964 as a memorial to Henry T. Swenson, it has become a memorial to other friends of the cooperative as well. The Burke-Divide Memorial Foundation trustees invest all memorial funds and each year the interest earned is used for a scholarship. Because the memorials are never spent, they remain perpetual, working to benefit students.

All U.S. college students, whose parents are members of Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative, are eligible to apply.

Those selected will be awarded the

scholarship after completion of one quarter or semester of college. To enter, write a letter about yourself with the following information:

- Your parents' names
- Your accomplishments, activities, special interests and hobbies
- What you are doing now, and the college you are attending
- Plans after graduation

Send your letter to:

Heidi Robbins
Burke-Divide Electric Cooperative
P.O. Box 6
Columbus, ND 58727

Applicants may also e-mail their information to heidi@bdec.coop.

The deadline for applying is Feb. 3, 2010.

Can a portable electric space heater help cut your winter heating bills?

"If you are deciding to purchase a 'miracle' space heater, try to remember the old adage, 'If it seems too good to be true, it most likely is.'"

Carl Pedersen, North Dakota State University Extension Service energy educator

Electric heat is not a "miracle."

"It is difficult to open a newspaper these days without seeing advertisements for electric heaters that are purported to be new, 'miracle' heating sources capable of reducing energy costs by 50 percent," says Carl Pedersen, North Dakota State University Extension Service energy educator. "Many people are asking if these portable heaters are truly a new type of heating and if they are worth the money."

The answer may simply be "no."

Technology isn't new

The technology these heaters use is nothing revolutionary or new. A space heater is a simple

device — and it's close to 100 percent efficient, since almost all of the electric energy that goes into the unit is converted to heat. That being said, keep in mind that any time a portable electric space heater is turned on and producing heat, it's also consuming energy.

Any heater that plugs into a standard wall outlet can use only a maximum of about 1,500 watts of electricity, which will produce nearly 5,000 British thermal units (Btu) of heat (1 watt equals 3.4 Btu). Since all heaters use the same source of energy and only a limited amount of electrical energy is available, they will produce the same amount of heat.

And 1,500 watts will not heat an entire home. In fact, one rule of thumb suggests that it takes 10 watts of electricity to heat one square foot of space. In other words, 1,500 watts of electricity should heat a room measuring 150 square feet — but that's without considering other factors affecting the room, such as its location within the house, insulation, air leaks and number of windows and doors.

What problems are you trying to solve?

If you are using a space heater to continually warm an area of your home, it might be wise to look into alternative forms of electric heat. Your local electric cooperative can help you choose which one is right for you. And you will qualify for the off-peak electric heating rate. A heater that plugs into an outlet will not qualify for these lower rates.

Or maybe some simple home improvements might be the solution.

"Some consumers may believe it is cheaper to use a space heater for warming a chilly room, when actually a few very-low-cost home improvements could really be the solution,"



says George Maher, with the North Dakota State University Extension Service.

If you set up a space heater in an always-cold room to take the chill off, your power bill is going to increase unless you make other changes at home to reduce your energy use. In fact, the only way a portable electric space heater is going to help you lower your annual heating bill is if you use it to heat the room you're in and turn down the thermostat for the rest of the house.

This premise is the basis for claims made by the manufacturers of some portable electric space heaters that promise to reduce your heating bill by up to 50 percent.

While these claims are not untrue, they are at least misleading, Pedersen says.

"The only way they would be able to reduce heating bills by 50 percent is if homeowners used the space heater to heat the room they were in and turned down the thermostat for the home's heating system dramatically," Pedersen says.

According to the U. S. Department of Energy, homeowners can save up to 3 percent on their heating bill for each degree they lower their thermostat for a 24-hour period. So to achieve a 50 percent savings, homeowners would have to turn their thermostat down by 17 degrees for 24 hours a day.

Be a savvy shopper

When you go shopping for a portable electric space heater, you're going to find a lot of options.

Whether the advertised heaters are worth the money depends on the person purchasing the heater.

"Radiant and convection space heaters can be found at any hardware store for a fraction of the hundreds of dollars of the advertised heaters and heat just as well," Pedersen says. "Since some of the heaters come in decorative wooden boxes, homeowners need to determine if spending the money on appearance is worth it to them."

"The only difference in the heat they provide comes from how the heat is created and the way that heat is distributed, not the amount," Pedersen says.

The vast majority of electric heaters use infrared radiation (radiant) or convection to heat a space. Radiant heat provides warmth by heating the objects in front of the heater, just as a sunbeam heats whatever it touches. Radiant heat may be slightly more efficient because it can be used to heat only the objects in the line of sight of the heater, reducing the need to heat the entire room. The room temperature must be reduced to have a savings.

Convection heat relies on circulating heated air currents. Some models heat objects or liquids inside the heater that can retain the heat, reducing the need for cycling on and off. Air is then passed through the heater and the heat transfers to the air, which is circulated throughout the room.

Convection styles offer a gentler heat that's perfect for families with kids and pets, but they're not the best choice for drafty rooms.

If you cannot see the heating element, it is convection heat regardless of the claims or how the heat is created, Pedersen says.

Fan-forced designs provide immediate heat for a small space or an entire room.

Ceramic heaters get up to temperature faster than other styles and come in sizes appropriate for warming a small area for one person or an entire room. Baseboard versions

run silently, supply consistent warmth and take advantage of convection currents along walls and under windows to distribute warmth.

Look for these features

Check for the UL mark on any portable electric space heater you're considering, which means representative samples of the appliance have met Underwriters Laboratories' stringent safety standards. Most high-quality portable electric space heaters will include all or most of these features:

- An automatic safety switch that will turn the unit off if it tips.
- Thermostatic control, so the unit runs at full capacity to bring the room to the desired temperature and then switches to run at an energy-saving, lower-wattage level to maintain room temperature.
- An overheat sensor that shuts off the heater if it gets too hot.
- Integrated carrying handle (or easy-rolling wheels for larger units).
- Multiple-year warranty.
- A low surface temperature to protect your family and pets from burns.
- A guard or grill around the heating element.

Choose a portable electric space heater with a brand name you recognize from a source you trust. As you consider your heating solutions this winter, talk to the experts at your local electric cooperative. We can discuss heating equipment that's right for your personal situation. Give us a call today!

Follow these tips for safe operation of your portable electric space heater:

- Keep the space heater at least three feet away from household combustibles.
- Never use an extension cord with an electric space heater.
- Keep the heater away from water sources or damp areas.
- Inspect the space heater's power cord regularly. Do not use the heater if it has a damaged cord. If the cord is worn, have it replaced by a professional. Make sure the replacement cord is designated as an HPN cord — it's the only kind acceptable for electric space heaters.
- Check periodically for a secure fit of the space heater's plug in the wall outlet. If the plug becomes very hot, the outlet may need to be replaced by a qualified technician.
- Never leave the heater unattended without turning it off.
- Keep the heater out of walking paths.
- Don't dry items on the heater.
- Keep the heater where toddlers and pets cannot touch the unit.
- Place the space heater on a flat, level surface. Do not put the heater on furniture, since it may fall and dislodge or break parts in the heater.

Underwriters Laboratories (UL), an independent product safety testing organization, provided these tips.

For more safety tips from UL, go to www.ul.com. You also can visit the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission Web site at <http://www.cpsc.gov/volstd/heater/heater.html>.





Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation and maintenance of your portable electric generator.

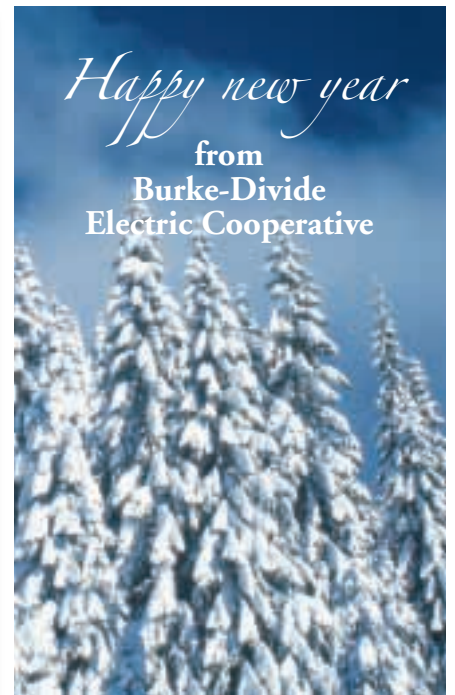
Follow generator guidelines

Your electric cooperative strives to provide you with reliable, uninterrupted service every day of the year, but sometimes Mother Nature creates unavoidable power outages. To combat the havoc wreaked by ice storms, thunderstorms or high winds, many homeowners turn to portable electric generators.

"Portable electric generators are a good source of power during electrical outages. However, generators that are improperly installed or operated can become deadly," noted Michael Clendenin, executive director of the Electrical Safety Foundation International (ESFI).

ESFI recommends following these portable electric generator safety precautions to avoid dangerous situations:

- Do not connect generators directly to household wiring. For everyone's sake—yours and the co-op's line crews—generators need to be isolated from the electric co-op's power lines. This means you should install a double-throw switch on your generator. Otherwise, the generator could feed power back into utility lines as power crews work to restore your electric service, putting their lives at risk!
 - Make sure your generator is properly grounded.
 - Keep the generator dry.
 - Plug appliances directly into the generator.
 - Do not overload the generator. A portable generator should be used only when necessary and only to power essential equipment or appliances.
 - Do not operate the generator in enclosed or partially enclosed spaces. Generators can produce high levels of carbon monoxide very quickly, which can be deadly.
 - Use a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) to help prevent electrocutions and electrical shock injuries.
 - Follow the manufacturer's instructions for safe operation and maintenance.



Happy new year
from
**Burke-Divide
Electric Cooperative**



BURKE-DIVIDE ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE

**Box 6 - 9549 Hwy. 5
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